UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER
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ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *11/26/08*.
2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**.   2b)☐ This action is non-final.
3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1,4 and 6-10* is/are pending in the application.
　　4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6)☒ Claim(s) *1,4 and 6-10* is/are rejected.
7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.
　　Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
　　Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
　　a)☐ All   b)☐ Some *   c)☐ None of:
　　　　1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
　　　　2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
　　　　3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
　　* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
　　Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
　　Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Notice to Applicant

1.   This communication is in response to the Amendment filed on 11/26/08. Claims

1, 4 have been amended. Claims 2-3 and 5 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 4 and 6-10

are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the
> invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
> Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3.   Claims 1, 4 and 6-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable

over Bjornson (6,505,145) in view of Hawman et al. (2003/0040826) and further in view

of Junger (7,379,899).

As per claim 1, Bjornson discloses a product management method for managing

products, product parts, and identifiers associated with the products and product parts

(See Bjornson, Fig.2, 3A, 5; Col.9, lines 49-67), and for monitoring and controlling

operations during a repair of a device or site containing the products or product (See

Bjornson, Col.12, lines 43-67 to Col.13, line 4), wherein the identifiers and associated

material master data are stored in a database (See Bjornson, Fig.6; Col.13, lines 9-30),

the method which comprises: generating a first database extract representing the

device or site to be repaired from the database (See Bjornson, Fig.9; Col.18, lines 23-68

to Col.19, line 17); generating a symbol or an image from the data of the first database

extract, the symbol or image being displayable on an input and output device and

storable in an image data memory (See Bjornson, Col.13, lines 22-67); inputting one or

more serial numbers of the device or of the site into the input and output device for data

adjustment (See Bjornson, Col.10, lines 50-67; Col.12, lines 32- 67); removing the

product or product part to be repaired as a repair part and inputting the spare part, with

the "unique serial numbers or serial number combinations", into the input and output

device and storing the information (See Bjornson, Col.8, lines 24-56); generating an

altered image and generating an altered database extract corresponding to the repaired

device or site from said altered image (See Bjornson, Col.13, lines 31-67); and storing

the altered database extract in the database memory (See Bjornson, Col.12, lines 43-

59).

However, this feature is known in the art, as evidenced by Hawman. In particular,

Hawman suggests disclose the extract containing the identifiers and associated material

master data including warranty data of the device or site (See Hawman, Page 4,

Paragraph 0072).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the

invention to have included the feature of Hawman within the system of Bjornson with the

motivation of providing a maintenance method and apparatus that increases the

visibility of parts and flow between areas of the maintenance facility (See Hawman,

Page 2, Paragraph 0027).

Bjornson in view of Hawman discloses all the limitations above. Bjornson and

Hawman do not explicitly disclose "providing a database with identifiers and associated material master data stored therein, the identifiers being unique serial numbers and serial number combinations"; "unique serial numbers or serial number combinations" and associated material master data including warranty data of the device or site; "determining whether or not a warranty case is in the database with respect to the repair part; delivering the repair part to a vendor as a warranty, whereupon the vendor returns the part as a new part or as a repaired part; supplying the repair part to inventory stock via a goods receipt module".

However, these features are known in the art, as evidenced by Junger. In particular, Junger suggests that the method has "providing a database with identifiers and associated material master data stored therein, the identifiers being unique serial numbers and serial number combinations" (See Junger, Fig. 6; Col.16, lines 57-67 to Col.17, line 7); "unique serial numbers or serial number combinations" and associated material master data including warranty data of the device or site (See Junger, Col.16, lines 57-67 to Col.17, line 7); "determining whether or not a warranty case is in the database with respect to the repair part (See Junger, Col.16, lines 57-67 to Col.17, line 7); delivering the repair part to a vendor as a warranty, whereupon the vendor returns the part as a new part or as a repaired part (See Junger, Col.24, lines 42-65); supplying the repair part to inventory stock via a goods receipt module" (See Junger, Col.24, lines 42-65).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have included the features of Junger within the teachings of Hawman and

Bjornson with the motivation of providing a computer system at a product return center

location obtains identifying information for a product which is to be returned from a

retailer to a manufacturer. In the disclosed example implementation, this identifying

information is then submitted to a remote return approval computer system through the

internet or the like. The return approval computer system may then utilize the identifying

information to determine whether the returned product satisfies applicable return

criteria. If so, the product is pre-approved for return. The product return location

preferably obtains identifying information for a plurality of returned products at a time. In

response to the product identifying information submitted by the product return location,

the return approval location may provide a list of approved returns and unapproved

returns, along with a return authorization number for a batch of approved returns. The

product return location may then assemble the approved product returns and ship the

batch to the return approval location (such as the manufacturer). Shipping costs can be

saved by omitting rejected product returns from the shipment. The return approval

location can handle the approved product returns from the regional return center as a

batch, thereby reducing costs.

As per claim 4, Bjornson discloses a data processing system for managing

products, product parts, and identifiers associated with the products and product parts

(See Bjornson, Fig.2, 3A, 5; Col.9, lines 49-67), and for monitoring and controlling

operations during a repair of a device or site containing the products or product parts

(See Bjornson, Col.12, lines 43-67 to Col.13, line 4), the system comprising: a

processing module for providing a first database extract associated with the device or site to be repaired from the database (See Bjornson, Fig.9; Col.18, lines 23-68 to Col.19, line 17), the first database extract containing the identifiers and associated material master data of the device or site (See Bjornson, Col.13, lines 31-67); a processing module for creating a symbol or image from data of the first database extract and storing in an image data memory, wherein the symbol or image is configured for display on an input and output device (See Bjornson, Col.13, lines 22-67); at least one input and output device configured for input of one or more "unique serial numbers or serial number combinations" of the device or the site for the purpose of data adjustment (See Bjornson, Col.10, lines 50-67; Col.12, lines 32-67); a processing module enabling a product or product part to be repaired to be removed as a repair part, whereupon "a unique serial numbers or serial number combination" of a spare part is input into said input and output device and stored (See Bjornson, Col.8, lines 24-56).

Bjornson does not explicitly disclose that the system having a processor for generating an altered image and for generating an altered database extract corresponding to the repaired device or site from the altered image; and a device for storing the altered database extract in the database memory.

However, these features are known in the art, as evidenced by Hawman. In particular, Hawman suggests that the system having a processor for generating an altered image and for generating an altered database extract corresponding to the repaired device or site from the altered image (See Hawman, Page 2, Paragraphs

0029-0030); and a device for storing the altered database extract in the database memory (See Hawman, Page 2, Paragraphs 0028-0030).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have included the feature of Hawman within the system of Bjornson with the motivation of providing a maintenance method and apparatus that increases the visibility of parts and flow between areas of the maintenance facility (See Hawman, Page 2, Paragraph 0027).

Bjornson in view of Hawman discloses all of the limitations above. Bjornson and Hawman do not explicitly disclose wherein the identifiers "in the form of unique serial numbers and serial number combinations" and associated material master data are stored in a database and warranty data form part of the database.

However, this feature is known in the art, as evidenced by Hawman. In particular, Hawman suggests that the system has disclosed wherein the identifiers "in the form of unique serial numbers and serial number combinations" and associated material master data are stored in a database and warranty data form part of the database (See Junger, Col.16, lines 57-67 to Col.17, line 7).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have included the features of Junger within the teachings of Hawman and Bjornson with the motivation of providing a computer system at a product return center location obtains identifying information for a product which is to be returned from a retailer to a manufacturer. In the disclosed example implementation, this identifying information is then submitted to a remote return approval computer system through the

internet or the like. The return approval computer system may then utilize the identifying

information to determine whether the returned product satisfies applicable return

criteria. If so, the product is pre-approved for return. The product return location

preferably obtains identifying information for a plurality of returned products at a time. In

response to the product identifying information submitted by the product return location,

the return approval location may provide a list of approved returns and unapproved

returns, along with a return authorization number for a batch of approved returns. The

product return location may then assemble the approved product returns and ship the

batch to the return approval location (such as the manufacturer). Shipping costs can be

saved by omitting rejected product returns from the shipment. The return approval

location can handle the approved product returns from the regional return center as a

batch, thereby reducing costs.

As per claim 6, Bjornson discloses the system wherein said processor module

and said device for storing are contained in a single system module (See Bjornson,

Col.8, lines 23-43).

As per claim 7, Hawman discloses the data processing system wherein the

system is configured to: determine whether or not a warranty case is present in the

database with respect to the repair part (See Hawman, Page 7, Paragraphs 0103-

0105); deliver the repair part to the vendor as a warranty case or as a repair case

without warranty and forwarded by the vendor as a new part or a repaired part (See

Hawman, Page 7, Paragraphs 0103-0105); supply the repair part to inventory stock a

goods receipt module and to store in the data memory (See Hawman, Page 4,

Paragraph 0072); and store new warranty data of the repair part in the data memory

(See Hawman, Page 6, Paragraphs 0092-0093).

As per claim 8, Bjornson discloses the data processing system implemented as a

distributed system with a plurality of modules and at least one mobile input and output

device (See Bjornson, Col.11, lines 44-67).

As per claim 9, Bjornson discloses a computerized warranty management

system, comprising a plurality of modules configured to perform the method according

to claim 1 (See Bjornson, Fig.2; Col.11, lines 44-67).

As per claim 10, Bjornson discloses a computer-readable medium having stored

thereon computer-executable instructions for performing the method according to claim

1 (See Bjornson, Col.8, lines 23-43).

Response to Arguments

4.   Applicant's arguments filed on 11/26/08 with respect to claims 1, 4 and 6-10 have

been fully considered but are moot in view of new ground (s) of rejections.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in

this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP

§ 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37

CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE

MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within

TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not

mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the

shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later

than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Conclusion

5.   The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to

applicant's disclosure. The cited but not the applied art teaches non-serialized electronic

product registration system and method of operating same (20030126034).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to VANEL FRENEL whose telephone number is (571)272-

6769. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Matthew S. Gart can be reached on 571-272-3955. The fax phone number

for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent

Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published

applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status

information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For

more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you

have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business

Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO

Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call

800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Vanel Frenel/

Examiner, Art Unit 3687

February 27, 2009